

New facility at Town of Kansas Historical Site

Location and Connections

This would be a new facility crossing the Missouri River; it would potentially reuse portions of the existing bicycle/ pedestrian facility that extends north from 2nd Street and Main over the Town of Kansas historical site. The existing facility would need to be raised to meet navigational clearance requirements over the Missouri River.

On the south side of the river, the existing facility connects the on-street portion of the Riverfront Heritage Trail (RHT) to the RHT along the riverbank. The new facility would cross the river and could connect into the Harlem neighborhood at the proposed trail on the levee, or into the street system at Harlem Road near Main or Grand Streets.

Adjacent Land Uses

This facility would provide connections to downtown Kansas City, the River Market, Harlem Neighborhood, Wheeler Downtown Airport, downtown North Kansas City, and areas of redevelopment along the south riverfront. In the River Market area, adjacent land uses are a mix of lofts, apartments and commercial/retail businesses. South of the River Market, users could also access the downtown central business district, which is a dense mix of retail, commercial and government uses. On the north side of the river, the bridge would touch down in the Harlem neighborhood, which is an area of residential, industrial, railroad and freight facilities; this would also provide access to the downtown airport.

Opportunities

- Town of Kansas Bridge is an existing bicycle pedestrian facility that is part of the Riverfront Heritage Trail.
- On the south side of the river, the facility has a good connection to the bicycle/pedestrian system in Kansas City, Mo.
- On the north side of the river, the facility will connect to a neighborhood and provide a connection to the Wheeler Airport.
- A facility west of the Heart of America Bridge provides a more direct connection for residential portions of the River Market and Downtown.
- Close to the 3rd and Grand transit center.

Challenges

- Adjustments to the height of the existing facility will be needed to meet clearance requirements for navigational purposes. The existing facility does not span the navigation channel. Extensive modification would be required for the existing facility to be used as part of a river crossing.
- While the facility would connect to a neighborhood, bicyclists and pedestrians would have an at-grade crossing of the Burlington Northern Santa Fe railroad track entering North Kansas City.
- Negotiations are ongoing with the North Kansas City Levee District for a trail on the levee; it will take time to reach an agreement.

The core team agreed that a new facility to the west of the Heart of America Bridge provided a number of interesting potential connections for user groups. This option was highlighted as one that should be further studied.

See the photographic display for more information.

ASB Bridge

Location and Connections

Before being replaced by the Heart of America Bridge, ASB connected Kansas City with North Kansas City along the Burlington Santa Fe line and Missouri Route 9. The existing bridge has two decks. The lower deck is used by the Burlington Northern Santa Fe railroad, and it rises to allow barge traffic to pass underneath. The upper deck (once used for automobiles) was removed when it was no longer needed for automotive traffic.

A trail on the lower deck access road would violate the railroad’s clear zone. In addition, trail users would need to be protected when the lift span was raised. These concerns led the core team to eliminate use of the lower deck in early discussions, so the challenges and opportunities in this section only relate to reconstruction of the upper deck.

The upper deck roadway approach has been removed, but it appears that at one time it connected south of the river with Grand Avenue. The roadway approach could be replaced and potentially connected to the Grand Avenue Viaduct or the Riverfront Heritage Trail on the south side of the river. To the north, the facility could be reconnected to the North Kansas City street system at Atlantic Street or potentially to the proposed trail on the North Kansas City Levee.

Adjacent Land Uses

This facility would provide connections to downtown Kansas City, the River Market, Berkley Park, downtown North Kansas City, and areas of redevelopment along the south riverfront. In the River Market area, adjacent land uses are a mix of lofts, apartments and commercial/retail businesses. South of the River Market, users could also access the downtown central business district, which is dense mix of retail, commercial and government uses. North Kansas City also provides a mix of land uses including industrial, commercial retail and residential.

Opportunities

- The top deck of the ASB is an existing facility that is at the appropriate height over the river.
- On the south side of the river, the facility could be connected to the Riverfront Heritage Trail, Berkley Park, and potentially the Grand Avenue Viaduct, which would connect the facility to the on-street system and transit.
- The facility could connect to a trail system or to the North Kansas City street system on the north side of the river.
- Close to the 3rd and Grand transit center and the transit stop at 10th & Burlington.

Challenges

- Negotiations with railroads are generally time intensive, sometimes taking years.
- Connections are necessary to get from the top deck to the street or trail system on both sides of the river.
- Negotiations are ongoing with the North Kansas City Levee District for a trail on the levee; it will take time to reach an agreement.
- Location of utilities and existing infrastructure on the south side of the river constrain the ability to meet ADA accessibility guidelines and connect to the Riverfront Heritage Trail and the Kansas City street system.

Although the ASB Bridge provides opportunities for a bicycle/ pedestrian facility, the core team determined that the challenges identified above made this option one that could not be implemented by 2012, so it was not carried forward for further study.

See the photographic display for more information.

Heart of America Bridge

Location and Connections

The Heart of America Bridge carries Missouri Route 9 (Burlington) between 3rd Street in Kansas City and 10th Avenue in North Kansas City. This crossing is actually two separate structures: one across the river and one over the Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) railroad lines. A bicycle-pedestrian facility would connect to 3rd Street in Kansas City, with a potential connection further south on Route 9 to the Government Center. On the north side of the river, the facility connects to North Kansas City’s street and sidewalk system.

Adjacent Land Uses

This facility would provide connections to downtown Kansas City via the Government Center, Berkley Park, Columbus Park, the River Market, downtown North Kansas City, and areas of redevelopment along the south riverfront. In the River Market area, adjacent land uses are a mix of lofts, apartments and commercial/retail businesses. South of the River Market, users could also access the downtown central business district, which is dense mix of retail, commercial and government uses. North Kansas City also provides a mix of land uses including industrial, commercial retail and residential.

Opportunities

- Heart of America has existing shared lanes with bike friendly grates and signing, and spans the railroad tracks north of the river.
- Good connections to Kansas City’s street system.
- Burlington carries several transit routes; there is a transit stop at 10th & Burlington.
- Near a transit center at 3rd & Grand.
- The facility could connect to a proposed trail system on the north side of the river, or to the street system in North Kansas City.
- The bridge has excess capacity that could be used for bicycles and pedestrians, eliminating the need to build a new structure.

Challenges

- The main challenge is meeting the needs of all of the user populations within the constraints of the existing bridge deck.
- The Heart of America options may require non-standard widths for vehicle lanes, the shared-use paths and bike lanes.
- Some users may view the 3rd Street connection as too indirect because they have to detour through the River Market to get into downtown.

On the Heart of America Bridge, the core team looked at a number of alternatives that included adding shared use paths to one or both sides of the bridge; striping bike lanes; signing shared use lanes; reducing southbound lanes from three lanes to two lanes; and widening the bridge deck.

The core team determined that two options on the Heart of America Bridge should be studied further:

- Option One would include a two-way, barrier separated, shared-use path on the northbound side of the bridge, and striped bike lanes on the northbound and southbound sides of the bridge.
- Option Two would include a two-way, barrier separated, shared-use path on the northbound side of the bridge, and a wide, shared-use lane for southbound vehicles and cyclists.

See the photographic display for more information.

Paseo Crossing

Location and Connections

The Paseo Bridge carries the I-29/35 interstate facility over the Missouri River. This facility connects North Kansas City and Kansas City. The facility connects to the Paseo Industrial District on the north and to Front Street and the downtown loop on the south.

The Paseo interstate corridor has a high volume of truck traffic and industrial land uses on the north side of the river. Because of these constraints, the core team recommends a shared use facility on the Paseo that would connect to Riverfront Heritage Trail on the south side and the proposed levee trail on the north side of the river.

Adjacent Land Uses

The Paseo Bridge is adjacent to Berkley Park, the Isle of Capri Casino, downtown Kansas City via the Grand Avenue Viaduct or Lydia Street, Columbus Park and the Paseo Industrial District.

Development opportunities exist on the south side (Front Street), around the Isle of Capri Casino. The Port Authority is creating a master plan for the area to the east along Grand, which may include a mix of residential, retail and commercial uses. Light industrial and railroad properties are developed to the east of the casino.

North of the river, the levee is in an industrial area. Many businesses are involved in freight and shipping activities, and there are some heavier industrial locations to the west of the Paseo Industrial District.

Opportunities

- There will be a new structure built, which presents an option to integrate a facility into the structure and not retrofit a bridge.
- Because this is a new facility, it would be easier to design a structure to meet the needs of a range of bicycle and pedestrian users, without a need for design exceptions or non-standard widths for the shared-use path or the adjacent traffic lanes.

Challenges

- The Federal Highway Administration requires logical connections. If MoDOT commits to a facility on the Paseo, then the community is also committing to building a trail to a logical connection point on the north side of the river.
- Interstate traffic travels at higher speeds, requiring additional safety considerations for bicyclists and pedestrians.
- There is a substantial height difference between the existing Paseo Bridge and the Riverfront Heritage Trail on the south and a similar height difference to the levee on the north side of the river. A lengthy ramp structure would be required to make the river structure fully ADA- compliant.
- Negotiations are ongoing with the North Kansas City Levee District for a trail on the levee, but there is not a commitment for a structure from the district.

This option was taken forward for additional analysis and will be evaluated in relation to a new facility and the Heart of America Bridge options.

See the photographic display for more information.



Mid-America Regional Council

600 Broadway, Suite 300
Kansas City, MO 64105
816-474-4240
www.marc.org



Missouri Department of Transportation

600 Northeast Colbern Road
Lee's Summit, MO 64086
816-622-6500
www.modot.org/kansascity

Core Team

A team was formed to study the feasibility of various crossing locations. The team consists of representatives from the agencies and groups listed below; their comments and suggestions are reflected in the information presented tonight.

Bridging the Gap
Deb Ridgway

Burns & McDonnell
Tony Schmitt

City of Kansas City, Missouri
Dennis Murphey
Shannon Jaax
Patty Hilderbrand

City of North Kansas City, Missouri
Mike Smith

Federal Highway Administration
Kevin Irving
Peggy Casey
Mary Ridgeway

Kansas City Area Transportation Authority
Mark Swope

Mid-America Regional Council
Aaron Bartlett
Marlene Nagel
Mell Henderson
Ron Achelpohl

Missouri Bicycle Federation
Brent Hugh

MoDOT
Linda Clark, Assistant District Engineer
Lee Ann Kell, Planning
Brian Kidwell, Design-Build

Next Steps

Public reaction and comments to these findings will be incorporated into the final report, which will identify a recommended location for a bicycle/pedestrian crossing. The recommended location will be presented to MARC's Total Transportation Policy Committee on October 24.

The recommended location will be added to the Environmental Impact Statement that will be completed before design and construction of a Missouri River bridge along the I-29/I-35 corridor. The final Environmental Impact Statement will be completed and available for public comment later this year.

Bicycle/Pedestrian Missouri River Crossing Feasibility Study

Public Meeting
Mid-America Regional Council
600 Broadway

October 10, 2006
4 p.m. – 7 p.m.



Purpose

In partnership with the Mid-America Regional Council, MoDOT is conducting a feasibility study to identify a bicycle/pedestrian river crossing location that MoDOT will commit to funding by 2012. The recommended location will be added to the Environmental Impact Statement that will be completed before design and construction of a Missouri River bridge along the I-29/I-35 corridor.

A main criteria for this study was to consider improvements that could be made on or before 2012. Any river crossing alternatives screened out during this feasibility study are not eliminated from future consideration.

A core team studied the feasibility of various crossing locations. Team members are listed on the back page.

Tonight's Meeting

Tonight's meeting will report on what the core team has discussed as alternatives for bicycle/pedestrian facilities in the downtown area, and present the team's recommended location for the facility. Public reaction and comments to these findings will be incorporated into the study team's final report, which will identify a recommended location for a bicycle/pedestrian crossing.

No formal presentation is planned. Please view the exhibits and talk to the team members present; they're here to answer questions and get your input. You may leave written comments at tonight's meeting, or mail them to MoDOT by October 20. You may e-mail comments to I29I35EIS@hntb.com

